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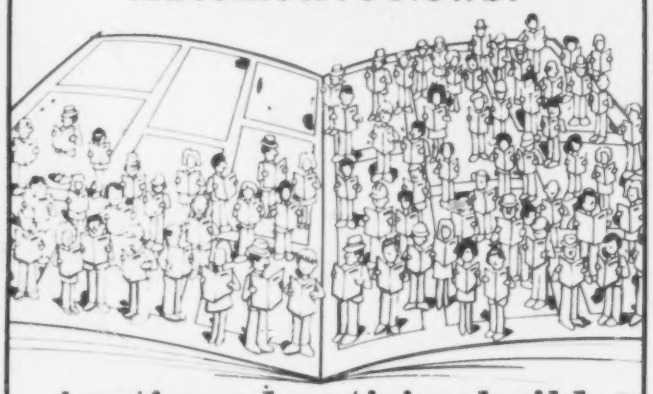

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AUCTION DATES

General Motors

April 5 — Auto Dealers Exchange of Birmingham, Moody, Ala.; Harrisonburg Auto Auction, Harrisonburg, Va.; Florida Auto Auction of Orlando, Ocoee, Fla.

April 6 — Hatfield Auto Auction, Hatfield, Pa.; Metro Auto Auction of Kansas City, Lee's Summit, Mo.; and Minneapolis Northstar Auto Auction, Shakopee, Minn.

April 7 — Butler Auto Auction, Gibsonia, Pa.; Denver Auto Auction, Englewood, Colo.; Aptco Auto Auction, Taylor, Mich.; Big H Auto Auction, Houston; and Nashville Auto Auction, Nashville, Tenn.

Chrysler Motors

April 5 — Aptco Auto Auction, Taylor, Mich.; South Seattle Auto Auction, Kent, Wash.; Arena Auto Auction, Chicago; Hatfield Auto Auction, Hatfield, Pa.; and Riverside Auto Auction, Riverside, Calif.

April 6 — Columbus Fair Auto Auction, Obetz, Ohio; Nashville Auto Auction, Nashville, Tenn.; and Southern Auto Auction, Warehouse Point, Conn.

Ford Motor Co.

April 5 — South Seattle Auto Auction, Kent, Wash.

April 6 — Northway Auto Auction, Cliffton Park, N.Y.; Atlanta Auto Auction, Red Oak, Ga.; and Southern California Auto Auction, Fontana, Calif.

April 7 — Dallas Auto Auction, Grand Prairie, Texas; Brasher's Sacramento Auto Auction, Rio Linda, Calif.; and Skyline Auto Exchange, Fairfield, N.J.

Used Car Sales
Auction Averages

March 1988	$5,566
Month ago	$5,309
Year ago	$5,829

Model Breakdown
Auction Averages

	MARCH 1988	FEB 1988	JAN 1987
1988	$11,426	$10,741	$8,839
1987	$8,700	$8,443	$8,435
1986	$6,923	$6,732	$6,516
1985	$5,821	$5,731	$5,501
1984	$4,400	$4,363	$4,349
1983	$3,748	$3,689	$3,362
1982	$2,531	$2,454	$2,303
1981	$1,940	$1,817	$1,926
Overall Average	$5,566	$5,309	$4,841

Tougher odometer law supported

Officials from Metro Auto Auction in Kansas City, Mo., and Anglo American Auto Auctions, based in Nashville, Tenn., testified before the Missouri Senate Transportation Committee recently in support of a bill to toughen state odometer laws.

Gary Dickinson, vice president of special services for Anglo, told committee members that auctions and retail dealers are at the mercy of state titling procedures.

He said some states with lax rules about putting correct mileage figures on titles make it easy for odometer spinners to obtain titles with incorrect figures.

"The clocker is able to present a valid, negotiable Missouri title, and neither the dealer nor the auction can tell that it has been clocked," Dickinson said.

The bill would require the Missouri Department of Revenue to maintain mileage readings on business vehicles. If an odometer discrepancy arose, the department would be required to alert the car buyer by branding the title.

Manheim expands

Atlanta-based Manheim Auctions has opened its Riverside Auto Auction in Riverside, Calif. Robert Mowers is general manager.

AUCTION BRIEFS

CHARLES THOMAS

The new facility brings to 18 the number of auctions owned and operated by Manheim, a division of Cox Enterprises. Manheim operates two other California sales — the California Auto Dealer's Exchange in Anaheim and the Fresno Auto Dealers Auction.

U-Haul sales increase

Sales of U-Haul International's fleet of 50,000 vehicles through Nashville-based Anglo American Auto Auctions have topped 700 vehicles in 12 weeks. A company official said U-Haul sales increased 24 percent from the first month to the second and 14 percent from the second month to the third.

"We're seeing the U-Haul vehicles selling well at all our locations, especially at our three largest commercial vehicle auctions in Dallas, Atlanta and Fort Wayne," said Bob Lalain, Anglo American national sales director.

"We expected that it would take us six months to hit full stride with this program, but we are ahead of target."

The five-year program marks the first time the national do-it-yourself moving company has used auctions to rotate its fleet.

About 10,000 vehicles will be sold through Anglo's 20 locations in 1988 including: F-350 trucks with one-ton chassis and aluminum van boxes measuring 14 feet; several varieties of Ford F-600 trucks with two-ton chassis and aluminum boxes measuring 12 feet, 16 feet, 20 feet and 24 feet; 1984 and 1985 Southwind motor homes; and 1985 27-foot Alumalite motor homes.

Vehicles are sold at dealer-only sales and in special public sales in auctions held in Atlanta; Fort Wayne, Ind.; Dallas; and San Francisco.

Dealers are alerted through direct mail, telemarketing and point-of-purchase advertising.

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PRODUCTION

Easter break slashes car, truck output

By Karen Detkowski
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The four-day Easter work week reduced the number of cars scheduled to be built to 116,130, 21.44 percent below the previous week's 147,821 and 29.77 percent below the year-ago week's 165,348.

So far this year, 1,671,175 cars have been assembled, 23.25 percent behind the 2,177,404 built last year at this point.

Companies split last week's targeted build as follows: General Motors, 47.81 percent; Ford Motor Co., 25.12 percent; Chrysler Motors, 15.89 percent; Honda of America Manufacturing Inc., 4.46 percent; New United Motor Manufacturing Inc., 2.24 percent; Nissan Motor Manufacturing Co., U.S.A., 2.02 percent; Mazda Motor Manufacturing (U.S.A.) Corp., 1.35 percent; and Volkswagen of America, 1.11 percent.

No overtime was scheduled last week. All plants except Honda and NUMMI will be closed today in observance of Martin Luther King's birthday.

This month, GM's Fiero plant in Pontiac, Mich., will operate four-day weeks so that workers can train for new jobs. The plant will close at the end of the model run.

Ford's Edison, N.J., plant, which had been idle for model changeover, will resume production tomorrow.

The last Volkswagen Jetta was built in Westmoreland, Pa., last week; the plant shuts down today for changeover. It will return on May 9, building only the 1989 Golf. The plant will close permanently on July 21.

U.S. truckmakers scheduled 66,370 units last week, down 24.98 percent from the previous week's 88,469 and 9.52 percent below the year-ago week's 73,352.

So far this year, truck output totals 1,081,081, 6.14 percent above the 1,018,538 assembled last year at this time.

Ford has slated overtime this week at its Wixom and Wayne, Mich., car plants and at its truck plants in Kansas City, Mo.; Norfolk, Va.; and Louisville, Ky.

Four-day week cuts production in Canada, too

Canadian automakers planned to build 22,008 cars last week, 16.72 percent below the prior week's 26,426 cars, but 63.64 percent above the year-ago week's 13,449 when three General Motors plants were down.

Assembly plants worked only four days last week.

So far this year, 286,896 cars have been produced, 18.96 percent above the 241,172 built last year at this point.

Truck output was scheduled at 15,074 last week, 24.59 percent below the previous week's 19,989 and 14.83 percent below the year-ago week's 17,698.

Year-to-date, 245,679 trucks have been assembled, 11.32 percent more than the 220,693 completed last year at this point.

U.S. CAR	Week Ended April 2, 1988	Week Ended April 4, 1987	Week Ended March 28, 1988	March Est.	Jan. 1 to April 2, 1988	Jan. 1 to April 4, 1987
Alliance	0	735	0	0	0	9,137
Total Eagle	0	735	0	0	0	9,137
Horizon	1,500	0	1,849	7,755	21,965	32,324
Sundance	1,700	2,431	2,186	9,560	27,237	30,141
Reliant	1,900	2,165	2,377	9,925	22,337	35,509
Caravelle	400	1,055	524	1,695	4,856	16,189
Gran Fury	100	95	112	586	2,678	4
Total Plymouth	5,600	5,746	7,051	29,723	79,093	114,167
LeBaron K	350	1,748	524	2,257	4,082	24,463
LeBaron J	1,400	2,733	1,899	8,425	14,025	24,080
LeBaron GTS	100	953	243	867	2,137	10,950
N. Yorker E-Class	1,700	1,880	2,351	3,711	8,051	24,185
N. Yorker C-Class	0	0	0	6,328	22,217	0
Fifth Avenue	150	1,175	192	1,263	11,182	5,451
Total Chrysler	3,700	8,489	5,209	22,851	57,694	89,110
Omni	1,500	0	1,881	7,685	21,610	27,744
Daytona	1,500	1,390	1,978	8,576	13,405	11,881
Shadow	1,600	2,450	2,270	9,894	26,279	26,754
Aries	1,700	2,133	2,333	8,667	18,413	30,891
Dodge 600	350	994	457	1,645	4,201	14,031
Dynasty	1,950	0	2,600	11,107	28,961	0
Lancer	150	564	163	887	2,947	7,431
Diplomat	400	205	693	2,245	5,572	257
Total Dodge	9,150	7,726	12,382	53,725	123,389	118,969
CHRYSLER MOTORS	18,450	22,726	24,642	103,299	260,175	331,403
Escort	4,104	8,166	4,252	16,249	65,188	101,658
Mustang	3,630	5,267	4,543	20,128	57,447	61,835
Tempo	3,350	4,453	4,406	18,603	52,770	54,936
Taurus	6,523	9,381	7,870	35,355	101,767	129,225
Thunderbird	2,767	3,452	3,454	14,798	41,908	40,306
Total Ford Div.	20,374	30,719	24,525	105,134	339,080	387,964
Lynx	0	1,012	0	0	0	16,331
Topaz	1,250	1,073	1,100	6,957	19,817	15,976
Cougar	1,811	2,556	2,316	10,790	31,910	49,045
Sable	2,377	3,463	2,753	12,048	32,378	41,340
Total Mercury	5,438	8,104	6,169	29,795	84,105	122,694
Continental	746	411	938	4,403	11,358	5,045
Mark VII	375	613	457	2,200	6,774	7,562
Lincoln	2,239	3,076	2,805	13,245	38,284	37,806
Total Lincoln	3,360	4,100	4,200	19,848	56,416	50,413
Total L-M Division	8,798	12,204	10,369	49,643	140,521	173,107
FORD MOTOR CO.	29,172	42,923	34,894	154,777	479,601	561,071
Skyhawk	637	797	1,040	3,883	9,070	12,392
Skylark/Somerset	296	0	369	1,645	6,029	21,013
Century	2,420	4,549	3,135	9,810	18,172	56,384
Regal (rwd)	0	975	0	0	0	12,698
Riviera	192	222	151	662	1,827	6,036
Electra	1,114	2,448	1,687	6,104	17,574	30,160
LeSabre (fwd)	2,300	3,623	3,411	12,078	32,231	30,848
LeSabre (rwd)	172	173	219	947	1,860	5,511
Reatta	125	0	129	511	1,008	0
Total Buick	7,366	12,787	10,121	35,640	87,771	175,241
Cimmaron	114	252	175	695	3,049	5,873
Eldorado	802	448	1,180	4,917	9,165	5,306
Seville	479	441	702	2,944	6,014	7,965
Brougham (rwd)	213	1,282	213	586	639	25,306
Deville (fwd)	3,200	3,984	4,029	17,782	50,047	49,650
Allante	52	100	65	299	583	706
Total Cadillac	4,860	6,507	6,365	27,204	69,497	94,817
Cavalier	5,732	6,439	6,999	31,642	84,483	100,060
Camaro	1,856	3,055	2,418	7,900	15,681	23,924
Celebrity	2,772	8,320	3,464	14,169	39,303	109,864
Corsica/Beretta	7,166	5,873	8,842	40,099	100,913	73,637
Monte Carlo	0	2,767	0	0	0	20,869
Caprice	2,560	5,450	3,153	14,251	50,109	84,136
Corvette	352	631	436	1,972	5,546	6,354
Total Chevrolet	20,440	34,535	25,314	110,022	296,034	399,864
Calais	1,624	0	1,980	9,060	26,372	28,800
Firenza	411	496	542	1,843	4,462	5,829
Cutlass Ciera	0	3,616	0	0	0	53,407
Cutlass Supreme	2,216	2,529	2,216	9,898	25,127	16,893
Toronado	423	374	481	2,098	4,565	5,077
88 (fwd)	2,695	3,373	4,050	15,383	39,829	63,249
88 (rwd)	204	414	289	1,005	3,297	5,196
Olds 98	1,545	1,804	2,157	6,504	23,073	25,084
Total Oldsmobile	9,118	12,706	11,705	47,516	125,961	203,536
Sunbird	1,750	2,711	2,150	9,217	27,466	33,667
Grand Am	3,840	2,088	4,615	21,174	61,403	72,382
Firebird	1,440	2,176	1,817	6,449	13,299	21,010
Grand Prix	2,041	0	2,061	9,214	26,389	0
Pontiac 6000	2,364	2,551	3,175	11,352	15,939	25,076
Bonneville	1,659	3,050	2,465	9,464	23,849	41,186
Safari/Parisienne	152	480	200	844	1,837	3,701
Fiero	498	0	616	2,695	4,735	9,992
Total Pontiac	13,734	17,047	17,079	70,408	165,807	207,018
GENERAL MOTORS	55,518	83,562	70,584	291,092	745,090	1,080,478
HONDA	5,180	7,085	8,043	33,208	91,475	91,725
Civic	1,405	1,741	2,171	8,779	22,583	31,948
Accord	3,775	5,344	5,872	24,429	68,892	59,777
MAZDA†	1,570	0	1,837	7,785	18,361	0
NISSAN	2,349	2,945	2,505	9,121	20,554	38,126
NUMMI	2,600	4,067	3,298	14,658	40,793	52,628
Corolla	960	806	1,248	5,419	14,486	10,825
Nova	1,640	3,261	2,050	9,239	26,307	41,803
VOLKSWAGEN	1,291	2,020	2,120	8,690	17,126	21,973
Golf/GTI	946	1,770	1,670	6,104	11,831	19,223
Jetta	345	250	390	2,586	5,296	2,750
Total Cars, U.S.	116,130	165,348	147,821	622,630	1,671,175	2,177,404
Total Cars, Canada	22,008	13,449	26,426	103,467	286,896	241,172
U.S., Canada Cars	138,138	178,797	174,247	726,117	1,958,071	2,418,576
U.S., Canada Cars and Trucks	219,592	269,847	262,705	1,186,918	3,264,691	3,657,807

Monthly estimates may contain error of one or two units due to rounding.
E—Estimate. †—Data included for 1988 Protégé and Navajo.

CANADIAN CAR	Week Ended April 2, 1988	Week Ended April 4, 1987	Week Ended March 28, 1988	March Est.	Jan. 1 to April 2, 1988	Jan. 1 to April 4, 1987
Eagle	0	—	0	0	0	—
Premier	1,320	—	1,695	4,139	17,456	—
CHRYSLER MOTORS	1,320	154	1,695	4,139	17,456	2,910
Escort	0	—	0	0	0	—
Lynx	0	—	0	0	0	—
Tempo	3,868	—	4,391	19,468	53,545	—
Topaz	1,132	—	1,356	6,011	18,742	—
Crown Victoria	2,400	—	2,835	12,713	36,282	—
Grand Marquis	2,400	—	2,870	12,747	35,642	—
FORD MOTOR CO.	9,800	10,581	11,452	50,980	144,211	146,826
Celebrity	273	—	435	1,505	4,644	—
Cutlass Ciera	5,999	—	7,528	27,331	80,165	—
Cutlass Supreme	0	—	0	0	0	—
Grand Prix	0	—	0	0	0	—
Pontiac 6000	896	—	1,135	3,423	11,913	—
Regal	3,200	—	3,397	12,413	38,871	—
GENERAL MOTORS	10,368	2,281	12,495	44,674	115,593	88,697
HONDA	570	206	834	3,068	8,070	1,914
VOLVO	150	225	150	651	1,567	2,925
Total Cars, Canada	22,008	13,449	26,426	103,467	286,896	241,172

U.S. TRUCK☆	Week Ended April 2, 1988	Week Ended April 4, 1987	Week Ended March 28, 1988	March Est.	Jan. 1 to April 2, 1988	Jan. 1 to April 4, 1987
Caravan	1,500	—	2,182	9,406	25,765	—
Dakota	2,200	—	2,835	12,543	30,631	—
Mini-Ram Van	250	—	360	1,260	3,907	—
Pickups	1,000	—	1,400	6,064	14,971	—
Total Dodge	4,950	4,910	6,777	29,275	75,274	66,099
Cherokee	2,400	—	3,218	15,339	45,691	—
Commanche	700	—	840	4,177	12,513	—
Grand Wagoneer	250	—	0	1,178	3,392	—
Pickups	0	—	0	0	0	—
Wagoneer	150	—	247	1,159	3,469	—
Total Jeep	3,500	4,526	4,305	21,853	65,065	58,294
Voyager	1,300	—	2,122	8,586	23,723	—
Total Plymouth	1,300	—	2,122	8,586	23,723	—
CHRYSLER MOTORS	9,750	9,436	13,204	59,714	164,062	124,393
Aerostar	3,600	—	5,115	20,316	59,052	—
Bronco	986	—	1,301	5,626	16,119	—
Bronco II	2,437	—	3,011	13,309	39,024	—
Econoline	4,144	—	5,184	23,046	65,720	—
Heavy trucks	1,119	—	1,410	6,151	17,247	—
Light trucks	8,320	—	11,853	48,593	131,606	—
Ranger	5,877	—	7,406	32,747	93,973	—
Total Ford Div.	26,483	31,437	35,060	149,788	422,741	423,300
FORD MOTOR CO.	26,483	31,437	35,060	140,788	422,741	423,300
Astro	2,589	—	3,314	15,628	45,180	—
Blazer	408	—	510	2,393	6,954	—
Medlums/Heavies	272	—	500	1,567	6,286	—
P-Model	719	—	879	2,160	10,100	—
Pickups	4,677	—	7,303	30,259	81,342	—
S-10	4,485	—	6,526	26,368	70,809	—
S-10 Blazer	2,727	—	3,095	15,737	39,293	—
Sportsvan/Van	1,505	—	1,874	7,628	18,846	—
Suburban	1,116	—	1,451	6,586	18,401	—
Total Chevrolet	18,498	19,051	25,752	108,326	297,211	256,427
Jimmy	129	—	168	853	2,318	—
Medlums/Heavies	726	—	777	4,073	11,731	—
P-Model	180	—	105	362	999	—
Pickups	706	—	2,334	9,800	27,413	—
S-15	603	—	1,613	7,227	19,331	—
S-15 Jimmy	634	—	1,341	5,646	9,808	—
Safari	640	—	757	3,940	11,532	—
Suburban	515	—	578	3,153	9,467	—
Vandura/Rally Vans	399	—	589	2,861	10,803	—
Total GMC	6,004	7,743	8,262	35,905	103,392	100,822
GENERAL MOTORS	24,502	26,794	34,014	144,231	400,603	357,249
NAVISTAR	1,402	1,596	1,737	7,508	22,339	20,363
NISSAN	1,503	1,738	1,684	8,678	35,586	22,693
AM GENERAL*	450	50	450	2,070	5,850	650
MISCELLANEOUS*	2,300	2,300	2,300	10,580	29,900	29,909
Total Trucks, U.S.	66,370	73,352	88,469	382,570	1,081,081	1,018,536

CANADIAN TRUCK	Week Ended April 2, 1988	Week Ended April 4, 1987	Week Ended March 28, 1988	March Est.	Jan. 1 to April 2, 1988	Jan. 1 to April 4, 1987
Caravan	2,029	—	3,078	13,337	38,700	—
Mini-Ram Van	228	—	345	1,486	3,430	—
Ram Wagon	459	—	580	2,464	5,939	—
Ram Van	1,053	—	1,390	6,161	14,864	—
Total Dodge	3,767	8,902	5,393	23,448	62,933	114,861
Voyager	1,841	—	2,814	12,140	36,078	—
Total Plymouth	1,841	—	2,814	12,140	36,078	—
Wrangler	806	—	1,057	4,684	13,005	—
Total Jeep	806	840	1,057	4,684	13,005	8,235
CHRYSLER MOTORS	6,414	9,242	9,264	40,250	112,016	123,116
FORD MTR. (lt. trks.)	3,040	3,037	3,528	16,149	45,993	43,288
Light trucks	2,700	—	3,177	14,443	40,578	—
Vans	1,198	—	951	5,222	15,807	—
Total Chevrolet	3,898	—	4,128	19,665	56,475	—
Light trucks	1,140	—	1,702	7,620	20,078	—
Vans	362	—	1,143	3,512	8,239	—
Total GMC	1,502	—	2,845	11,131	28,317	—
GENERAL MOTORS	5,400	5,219	6,973	30,796	84,792	91,749
NAVISTAR	220	200	226	1,034	2,679	2,563
Total Trks., Canada	15,074	17,698	19,989	88,229	245,679	220,693
U.S., Canada Trks.	81,444	91,050	108,458	470,799	1,326,760	1,239,231

—Includes window van production. *—Estimated.
Jeep includes commercial only. AM General includes government-contract vehicles.
Miscellaneous includes estimates for Mack, Volvo-White, Kenworth, Peterbilt, Freightliner, Mercedes-Benz, etc.
Monthly estimates may contain error of one or two units due to rounding.

4/14/88 C 2700-1

Automotive News

April 11, 1988

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Nissan speeds shop pact

Will serve dealers accused by Adesco

By Francis J. Gawronski
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

LOS ANGELES — Nissan Motor Corp. in U.S.A. must set up its own extended service contracts unit faster than expected to handle contracts sold by about 50 dealers. Nissan's vendor, Oklahoma-based Adesco Corp., has accused those dealers of fraud in filing excessive claims for parts and service.

Nissan expected to take control of all its dealers' extended service contracts when Adesco's contract expires in September. But a lawsuit in U.S. District Court for the Central District of California has accelerated its plans.

To win a temporary injunction prohibiting Adesco from terminating more than 175 Nissan dealers across the country that Adesco says filed excessive or fraudulent claims, the auto importer agreed in federal court last week to administer the extended service contracts sold by those dealers that Adesco says are the worst.

"Nissan management has indicated they will have the capability of handling service contracts for the 50 dealers within the week," said attorney Randy Huff, outside counsel for the auto firm.

The company hired Adesco to insure and administer the Security Plus Plan offered by Nissan to owners of new vehicles and certain used vehicles.

Most automakers have their own extended service contract plans, and Nissan says it will take the Security Plus Plan in-house when its agreement with Adesco expires.

Meanwhile, the battery of lawsuits between the two companies has hurried that process. It also has

see NISSAN, page 67

AUTOMOTIVE NEWS/...RYDER

OUSTED

Mecham's troubles hit dealership, workers, too

By Jesse Snyder
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

GLENDALE, Ariz. — At 2:30 on a blistering afternoon, mechanic Gary Maniag is sprawled in a chair in Service Manager Bill Jordan's office at Mecham Pontiac. Nobody's upset by his inactivity. Maniag stretched his work out as much as possible, but even with most of the service bay hoists unused, there are no cars left and it's too early to go home.

And even when he does leave, there won't be any milk-on-the-way-home stops. The last time Maniag wore his Mecham Pontiac uniform into a convenience store, one of the plentiful political foes of his boss, now-impeached Arizona Gov. Evan Mecham, cursed him loudly.

"I can't repeat what he called me," Maniag says, nodding in the direction of Peg Drager, the dealership's warranty specialist.

Whatever it was, it is unlikely to have offended Drager, a former policewoman who once killed an armed suspect who pointed a gun at her and her sergeant.

Like all the 76 remaining employees at Mecham Pontiac, both have the wary look of siege survivors.

The economics of a dealership wilting under the political firestorm of simultaneous recall and impeachment of the owner are a hardship.

When Maniag did his 1987 tax return, he reported his wages had fallen $17,000 in a single year. Like most Mecham employees outside of the clerical staff, his income is tied directly to volume.

Mecham Pontiac-Renault license plate, top, will become obsolete when the store's sale becomes effective May 1. Evan Mecham is shown above.

Several workers said all departments are down 75 percent since 1986.

Why stay amid the turmoil, the losses, the frustration and personal embarrassment?

Maniag shrugs and answers quickly, unwilling to analyze the question.

"It's still a good place to work," he says.

But there are occasional outbursts.

"Sadness, anger, frustration," one longtime employee said. "Sometimes I feel we all have been cheated."

Word that the 38-year-old family-owned dealership has been sold to Kemp Biddulph, the neighboring Oldsmobile-Honda dealer, came on the heels of Mecham's impeachment last week, the first U.S. governor in 59 years to be removed from office by that process.

Biddulph's pledge to retain as many of the employees as possible is welcome news, but most are unwilling to openly express hope.

"We've lived with uncertainty so long, we just don't dare say anything positive too

see MECHAM, page 67

UAW wants Chrysler ban on plant sales

By Louise Kertesz
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The UAW plans to ask Chrysler Motors for the gains it won in General Motors and Ford Motor Co. contracts last year, plus — in the wake of the near-sale of Chrysler's Acustar parts subsidiary — a guarantee that its plants won't be sold.

If successful in this spring's talks, that would give the UAW a moratorium on plant closings and plant sales by Chrysler — as well as the strong job assurances won by the Big 2 in 1987 talks.

The 190-member UAW national Chrysler council last week voted to demand a contract patterned after those at GM and Ford. The new Chrysler pact would expire on the same date as the others — Sept. 14, 1990.

The pattern agreement would give workers a bonus of 3 percent of their earnings for the next two years instead of base-wage increases. It would guarantee the jobs of the entire workforce except in the case of sales declines. The new pact would cover about 70,000 Chrysler workers including about 6,400 on salary.

During the council's contract strategy session, it was learned that the UAW has made an important inroad in organizing salaried workers at Chrysler, a gain that will spearhead further salaried-worker organizing.

The UAW has organized a group of 45 office workers at the Sterling Heights, Mich., assembly plant. They are the first white-collar salaried workers at Chrysler to join the union as a new unit in about five years.

Since workers throughout the industry are feeling threatened by the automakers' cost-cutting measures, job guarantees are particularly important to Chrysler salaried workers. Chrysler announced it wants to cut its salaried workforce by 3 percent in each of the next three years.

The UAW wants workers at Acustar plants to get the security and benefits of the new agreement. President Owen Bieber said that negotiators will try to salvage the four Acustar plants Chrysler wants to close and that protection will be sought for workers there.

But Bieber told delegates those four plants are similar to plants GM and Ford marked for closure before negotiations. Those were excluded from the job guarantees, though workers there are covered by other parts of the contracts.

At the last session of the council, members voted

see UAW, page 68

BETTER DAYS

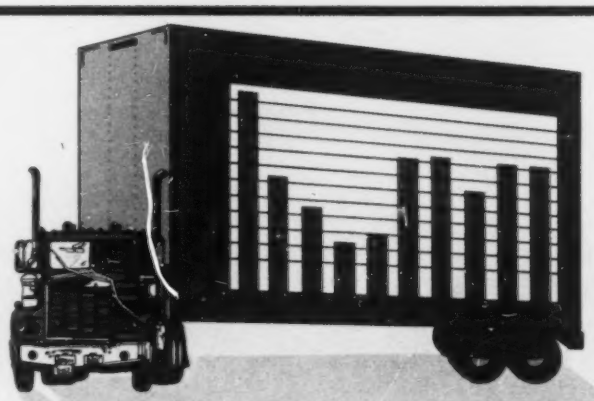
Big-truck market is tough, but dealers report progress

By Joseph Bohn
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

RENO, Nev. — Although the medium/heavy truck market is still facing many of its familiar problems, the outlook for dealers has improved markedly compared to recent years.

Dealer net profit as a percentage of sales, for example, is currently 1.8 percent, the same as at the end of last November, according to the National Automobile Dealers Association's Bob Young.

Even better news is that, with sales up, most dealers



Stempel, Spethmann open World Congress

DETROIT — General Motors President Robert C. Stempel and Dieter Spethmann, chairman of the executive board of Dusseldorf-based Thyssen AG, will be the keynote speakers at this year's Automotive News World Congress.

The Congress, the 13th annual, will be held July 17-20 at the Westin Hotel in Detroit's Renaissance Center. The event will open with a Sunday night dinner, after which Stempel will speak about the State of the Industry from a manufacturer's perspective and Spethmann will address the State of the Industry from a supplier's standpoint.

In all, more than 30 speakers will make presenta-

see CONGRESS, page 68

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Dealer tests workers for drug usage

YAKIMA, Wash. — Ten employees at Valley Ford-Toyota will enter drug rehabilitation or counseling programs as a result of the dealership's drug-testing program.

General manager Dave Thomas said the testing was prompted by his concern about the city's drug problem. Yakima has a population of just under 50,000, and Thomas called it a major U.S. center for the drug trade. The city is about 140 miles southeast of Seattle.

"We are no different than any other business. All have a prevailing drug problem. I wanted to know the extent of ours," he said.

Of the dealership's 100 employees, nine showed evidence of marijuana use and another showed positive for cocaine. In addition, two employees admitted having an alcohol problem — even though they tested negative for alcohol. They asked for help and have entered rehabilitation programs, Thomas said.

The dealership, Thomas said, will follow up on the drug testing with random checks. Any employee who tests positive for drugs a second time will be fired. Employees who abuse alcohol, however, will be judged on a case-by-case basis.

"Alcohol is not against the law, society accepts it . . . drugs will not be tolerated," Thomas said.

An employee who tested positive for alcohol was not required to enter rehabilitation. It was determined he had consumed the alcohol the previous evening.

Asked if employees would have been fired had they refused to take a test, Thomas said, "Fortunately, I didn't have to cross that bridge. I can't speculate on that."

However, at least one employee objected to the testing.

"I think it's a bunch of crap," said an employee, who did not wish to be identified. "It's giving the wrong impression of the place (where) I work," he said.

But other employees supported the testing. "Hopefully, it will weed out some bad apples," said Paul Koreski, an assistant manager in the service department.

The testing was conducted at Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital.

Automotive News Staff Reporter Arthur Flax in Detroit and The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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Other AAA clubs are watching the Tampa program

AAA marketing autos

Tampa club offers dealer referrals

By Charles M. Thomas
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

AAA Peninsula Motor Club in Tampa, Fla., has joined the list of wholesale companies offering its members huge discounts on new cars and trucks under a system that uses Florida dealers to supply the vehicles.

Since launching the program in November, AAA Peninsula has signed 107 dealerships and sold about 800 vehicles in west Florida. Represented are 13 domestic makes, 20 imports and 830 models, the club said.

Kevin Bakewell, director of public relations for AAA Peninsula, said the motor club and insurer asked its 880,000 members in a survey what services they most desired. Hassle-free auto purchases headed the list.

AAA Peninsula is an affiliate of the national American Automobile Association. Hence, other clubs are monitoring the success of the program for possible implementation, said Bakewell.

Other companies with similar systems include Amway Corp. of Grand Rapids, Mich. (Automotive News, Nov. 16) and Sam's Wholesale Club, whose parent company is Wal-Mart Stores (Automotive News, Nov. 9).

Amway, the wholesale purveyor of soap, car wax and other household products, markets cars at $150 above invoice under a system that uses Ford Motor Co., General Motors and Chrysler Motors dealers to supply vehicles.

It claims a network of 1,500 auto dealers in 26 states and eventually plans to expand to 35 states. It boasts that it has 750,000 distributors — all potential car buyers — and an unknown number of customers.

Sam's has an outlet in Orlando, Fla., that uses the system to sell cars to its members by referring them to preferred dealers. Cars sell for $100 over invoice.

Bakewell said the price negotiated between AAA Peninsula and

see AAA, page 68

GM's cut-rate loans cost $876 million

By Edward Lapham
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Cut-rate-loan incentives cost General Motors $876.54 million in 1987, down significantly from the peak incentive year, 1986, when the programs cost GM $1.3 billion.

In 1985, the year GM began using widespread loan incentives, the cost was $276 million, according to information disclosed in GM's Form 10-K annual report filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The finance incentive costs were in addition to $1.35 billion spent on advertising in 1987, up from $1.12 billion in 1986 and $1.04 billion in 1985, the report disclosed.

Under its low-rate retail finance programs, GM pays an interest rate differential to its financing subsidiary, General Motors Acceptance Corp., according to the SEC filing.

The payments are included in unearned income by GMAC and recognized over the life of the various retail sales contracts. The amounts recognized by GMAC accounted for 7.3 percent of its gross financing revenue on 1987, 10.9 percent in 1986 and 3.1 percent in 1985.

GM also disclosed in the 10-K that GMAC purchased $256.4 million in data processing and services from Electronic Data Systems, another GM subsidiary.

Other related-party transactions disclosed in the 10-K included GM Hughes Electronics Corp.'s purchases from other GM units. They included computer systems services from EDS of $171.5 million in 1987, compared with $102.5 million in 1986 and $59.2 million in 1985.

GM Hughes also paid $13.6 million to GM for common administrative expense in 1987, compared with $26.5 million in 1986 and $24.5 million in 1985.

EDS revenues from its contract with GM amounted to $2.88 billion in 1987 and are expected to be $2.9 billion in 1988, the report said.

It also disclosed that during 1987, GM was sued four times by the federal EPA for alleged violations of the Clean Air Act and twice by the Ohio EPA for alleged violations of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

The federal complaints involve the Lordstown, Ohio; Framingham, Mass.; Arlington, Texas; and Shreveport, La.; assembly plants with total potential liability of $775 million, according to information in the SEC filing.

GM has countersued the EPA over the Arlington complaint, seeking "declaratory and injunctive relief."

The two Ohio actions involve Fisher Guide operations in Columbus and the Harrison Radiator plant in Moraine.

Ohio has offered to settle the Fisher Guide suit for $120,000, GM disclosed, although penalties in the Harrison Radiator suit could exceed $100,000.

Buick boss denies plan to cut Regal sticker price

By John A. Russell
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

NEW YORK — Buick has denied a report that it is considering a reduction in the sticker price of the Regal.

Edward Mertz, division general manager, said there was a "misunderstanding" about Regal's pricing strategy in a recent Detroit newspaper report. While Regal pricing was designed to meet the competition with more content and modest option discounts, there was a perception by the public that Regal was more expensive than its competition.

Buick has adopted a strategy of option-package incentives that has boosted sales in the past month. Mertz said it is the only type of selling incentive Buick is planning.

As the first of the GM10 cars to be introduced, Regal has drawn much attention. The redesigned, front-wheel-drive model has been on the road since last October.

But Buick may have been outmaneuvered in the annual pricing game that goes on in Detroit among General Motors, Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler Motors.

The base prices for the Regal Custom, $12,449, and Regal Limited, $12,782, were set to bring the cars into head-on competition with Ford Thunderbird and Mercury Cougar. However, Ford's pricing turned out to be $600 less than Buick estimated for the 1988 models.

That meant Buick had to react. That move was made in early March in the form of option-package discounts.

A problem arose early when potential consumers perceived the car as costing $2,500 more than the actual sticker price when equipped with the popular options, Mertz said. Those buyers pegged the car at $16,000 to $17,000 — not the approximately $14,000 when loaded.

So Buick initiated a series of option-package incentives, which ranged from $300 to $900. Mertz stressed that the items in the packages are those typically ordered by consumers as separate options and included air conditioning, power windows and tilt steering wheel.

Mertz said the new Regal has outsold the old model by a considerable margin.

For the current model year, 54,077 1988 Regals have been sold through March 31, compared with 26,115 for the 1987 rear-wheel-drive model. In the January-March period, 30,089 Regals were sold, compared with 11,579 during that period in 1987. Sales for March were 11,203, compared with 5,064 in the year-earlier month. Sales increased 10.14 percent in March over February's pace.

A Buick spokesman said the division is projecting "just over 100,000" Regal units out of a total Buick forecast of about 600,000 for the calendar year.

As for Regal cannibalizing the sales of other Buick models, Mertz said he did not see as much as some first thought. He also said there are 600,000 owners of rwd Regals and they are a prime target for the division.

Fleets are another good market. Fifteen percent of Buick sales are to fleets with 90 percent going to 10 major rental fleets. The Buick Skylark is "an aggressive fleet car" he said.

Sterling delays decision on fate of ad agency that seeks Saturn

By Laura Clark
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Austin Rover Cars of North America said last week that, at least for now, it will not sever its 11-month-old relationship with its advertising agency, Hal Riney and Partners, San Francisco.

Riney is one of three finalists for the $100 million Saturn advertising account. Austin Rover officials were not notified that the agency was pursuing the General Motors subsidiary's business until two weeks ago. Feeling betrayed by the late notice, the importer had said it was considering dismissing Riney as the agency for its $20 million Sterling car account.

However, that changed when agency chairman Hal Riney flew to Austin Rover headquarters in Miami last Monday and assured executives that the agency wants to keep the account. Raymond Ketchledge, Austin Rover Cars of North America president, said Riney made "certain reassurances" about the relationship.

Ketchledge said his company is taking a "wait-and-see" position on whether Riney will be fired if the agency lands the Saturn business.

Saturn has said it will not choose an agency with a conflicting automotive account.

Thomas Shaver, Saturn director of marketing services, declined to name the three finalists. However, ad agency sources say the other two are N W Ayer, New York; and Hill, Holliday, Connors, Cosmopulos, Boston. Industry observers favor Ayer to win because it holds GM's corporate advertising account.

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U.S. deficit rises 10% in auto trade

By Geoff Sundstrom
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

WASHINGTON — The U.S. automotive trade deficit in passenger cars and light trucks was up 10.5 percent in January, compared with the year-earlier period. The rise occurred despite a healthy 27.3 percent gain in exports over January 1987.

Trade numbers released by the U.S. Department of Commerce show a trade deficit of $3.702 billion for passenger cars and light trucks in January. Total car and truck exports for the month had a value of $652.5 million. The month's car and truck imports were valued at $4.354 billion.

Passenger-car exports in January reached 44,570 vehicles with an estimated value of $498.8 million. Light-truck exports for the month were 14,129 vehicles with an estimated value of $153.7 million.

Passenger-car exports to Japan were up several hundred units and exports to Canada increased several thousand units. Exports to other countries increased 4,261 units.

On the import side, South Korea, Mexico and Brazil continued to post big increases in car shipments, compared with January 1987. Both the value and quantity of car and truck shipments from Japan declined, compared with a year ago.

Total car and truck imports for January had a value of $4.354 billion, up 12.71 percent from the $3.863 billion in automotive imports shipped in January 1987. There were 451,545 finished vehicles imported to the United States in January 1988, compared with 416,902 in January of last year.

Passenger-car imports reached 379,779 units for the month with a value of $3.828 billion, while light-truck imports were 71,766 units with a value of $526.6 million.

The number of passenger cars imported from South Korea in January increased 160 percent from the year-ago period. Imports from Mexico were up 179 percent. Brazilian imports were 5,933 units for the month, up from 20 vehicles shipped in January 1987.

South Carolina ban on tent sales means higher prices, FTC says

By Matt DeLorenzo
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

The Atlanta office of the Federal Trade Commission said that a South Carolina law barring off-site tent sales by dealers harms consumers by increasing prices.

David C. Waldrop Jr., a South Carolina legislator who introduced a bill to allow tent sales, requested the opinion from the FTC staff.

In its response, the FTC staff said, "We believe that laws prohibiting off-site sales may prevent dealers from adopting the most efficient sales methods and restrict consumer choice in the purchase of new and used cars. Consequently, consumers may be forced to pay higher prices."

As an example, the FTC letter said current law prevents fleet dealers from holding used-car sales on credit union property.

"Since these sales entail low overhead, fleet dealers would be able to pass along savings to consumers," the staff said.

It added that the Illinois Credit Union League has estimated that credit union members pay an average of $1,118 less for used cars at such sales than through "conventional" channels.

The ban also affects new-car sales, the staff said. "For example, credit unions cannot organize new-car sales events at central locations, such as fairgrounds or shopping center parking lots," the FTC staff said. "Such events, which allow a number of dealers to offer vehicles to consumers at the same location, may result in savings to consumers."

The staff said that while the purpose of the tent-sale ban is to protect customers from deceptive practices, it believes other sections of South Carolina's law "address this objective in other ways."

The letter concluded. "We believe that unjustified limitations on off-site sales by automobile dealers are likely to increase dealer costs and decrease competition and therefore increase the prices consumers pay for motor vehicles. For these reasons, we believe that (Waldrop's measure), if enacted, would benefit consumers."

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U.S. AUTOMOTIVE TRADE BY VALUE

(x $1,000)

Passenger cars

Country	Trade	Jan. 1987	Jan. 1988	Feb. 1986-Jan. 1987	Feb. 1987-Jan. 1988
Japan	Export	2,895	9,805	43,541	79,200
	Import	1,710,337	1,556,264	21,096,931	21,150,664
Canada	Export	280,303	352,234	5,591,363	5,799,083
	Import	583,987	989,328	11,519,207	10,590,784
West Germany	Import	571,838	622,604	8,010,987	8,952,616
South Korea	Import	103,066	271,932	891,071	2,230,323
Sweden	Import	151,756	142,522	1,821,998	1,932,254
Mexico	Import	46,021	109,093	407,671	1,239,446
Yugoslavia	Import	8,925	11,431	99,078	128,748
United Kingdom	Import	70,400	54,027	726,224	1,177,464
Italy	Import	9,423	14,943	161,996	183,485
France	Import	10,484	8,110	121,917	253,624
Brazil	Import	200	31,464	825	270,465
Others	Export	77,344	136,772	457,448	949,200
	Import	7,694	15,921	165,164	301,726
Car total	Export	360,542	498,811	6,093,682	6,827,483
	Import	3,272,041	3,827,639	45,025,069	48,411,601
Trade balance		(2,911,499)	(3,328,828)	(38,931,387)	(41,584,118)
Light trucks (up to 10,000 lbs. GVW)					
Canada	Export	132,251	116,475	1,521,240	1,579,825
	Import	148,280	235,279	2,328,591	2,318,019
Japan	Import	431,177	280,252	4,875,626	4,127,200
Mexico	Import	10,086	141	130,292	80,144
Others	Export	19,923	37,243	117,971	224,433
	Import	1,666	10,917	63,109	81,197
Truck total	Export	152,174	153,700	1,639,211	1,804,258
	Import	591,209	526,589	7,397,618	6,606,561
Trade balance		(439,035)	(372,889)	(5,758,407)	(4,802,303)
Car and truck total	Export	512,716	652,511	7,732,893	8,631,741
	Import	3,863,250	4,354,228	52,422,687	55,018,162
TRADE BALANCE		(3,350,534)	(3,701,717)	(44,689,794)	(46,386,421)
TOTAL U.S. Merchandise trade (customs value)	Export	16,755,000	22,329,700	216,342,900	259,440,600
	Import	27,466,400	33,217,700	363,439,500	411,651,900
TRADE BALANCE		(10,711,400)	(10,888,000)	(147,096,600)	(153,211,300)

U.S. AUTOMOTIVE TRADE BY QUANTITY

Passenger cars

Country	Trade	Jan. 1987	Jan. 1988	Feb. 1986-Jan. 1987	Feb. 1987-Jan. 1988
Japan	Export	203	685	2,765	5,203
	Import	197,236	171,923	2,578,173	2,392,194
Canada	Export	28,109	33,949	611,499	566,293
	Import	53,765	90,998	1,126,240	964,160
West Germany	Import	26,160	25,634	435,456	377,016
South Korea	Import	20,825	54,307	190,134	433,338
Sweden	Import	11,740	9,423	147,191	136,248
Mexico	Import	4,635	12,932	40,248	134,563
Yugoslavia	Import	3,623	4,469	39,828	50,311
United Kingdom	Import	2,730	1,845	27,737	49,174
Italy	Import	633	725	11,238	8,740
France	Import	946	566	10,708	26,327
Brazil	Import	20	5,933	206	54,082
Others	Export	5,675	9,936	33,981	70,496
	Import	537	1,004	11,812	19,784
Car total	Export	33,987	44,570	648,245	641,992
	Import	322,852	379,779	4,618,971	4,645,937
Trade balance		(288,865)	(335,209)	(3,970,726)	(4,003,945)
Light trucks (up to 10,000 lbs. GVW)					
Canada	Export	13,345	11,544	167,478	162,041
	Import	13,690	21,934	252,599	234,782
Japan	Import	79,039	49,685	957,414	743,404
Mexico	Import	1,320	0	17,276	9,976
Others	Export	1,393	2,585	10,312	17,809
	Import	1	147	958	632
Truck total	Export	14,738	14,129	177,790	179,851
	Import	94,050	71,766	1,228,247	988,794
Trade balance		(79,312)	(57,637)	(1,050,457)	(808,943)
Car and truck total	Export	48,725	58,699	826,035	821,843
	Import	416,902	451,545	5,847,218	5,634,731
TRADE BALANCE		(368,177)	(392,846)	(5,021,183)	(4,812,888)

Compiled by Automotive News from official statistics of the U.S. Commerce Department, as reported by the U.S. International Trade Commission. Because of rounding, figures may not add to the totals shown.